

North Central Idaho Resource Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes
March 30th & 31st, 2016

Meeting Location: Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests, Grangeville Office, Main Meeting Room

RAC Members Present: Kent Henderson (Chairman), Steve Didier, Robert Abbott, Bob Hafer, Jim Rehder, Mary Mangold, Don Ebert, Gary Lane, Chris St. Germaine, Craig Spencer, David Bodine and Susan Borowicz.

RAC Replacement Members Present: None, positions are currently vacant.

Guests: Sally Ferguson (Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation, SBFC), Connie Taylor Johnson (SBFC) Jessica Vance (Clearwater Soil & Water Conservation District), Megan Lucas (Forest Service), Jay Snowden (ICC), Michael Ball (Forest Service, Hells Canyon NRA), Cathy Conover (Forest Service, Hells Canyon NRA), Stefani Spencer (Forest Service), Jeff Shinn (Forest Service), Linda Hinds (Forest Service), Geoff Kaeberle (Forest Service), Ralph Rau (Ralph Rau), Cheryl Probert (Forest Service), Tom Lamar (Latah County, Pacific Clearwater Environmental Institute – PCEI), Mike Hanna (US Senator Jim Risch), Mitch Silvers (US Senator Mike Crapo), Michele Windsor (Forest Service), Alex Irby (Clearwater Basin Collaborative – CBC), Anne Connor (Forest Service), Susan Graves (Forest Service), Anna Bengtson (Forest Service) and Elayne Murphy (CBC).

Designated Federal Official: Laura Smith

Recorder: Lisa Canaday

I. Call to Order and Agenda Review

Introductions: 12 members and 22 guests were present.

Agenda Adjustments – Some projects were dropped from RAC consideration due to being able to fund by different means.

Chris St. Germaine mentioned that there was some language in the news release that said proposals must be on Forest Service land within Idaho, Latah and Clearwater County.

Review agenda followed by FACA training

Discussion of solicitation of new RAC members and new DFO.

The new Designated Forest Official will be the Deputy Forest Supervisor. Solicitation of new members will need to be an effort by everyone. Kent mentioned that the diversity of opinion has been what has made this committee work.

Laura reviewed the application packet as well as different ideas for where to solicit members and a packet was passed out to all of the RAC members.

Q: Is there a minimum age? A: 18

C: It seems that there has been some uncertainty about whether we will be having a meeting each year that Gary hesitates to recommend being a RAC member to anyone. Is there any more certainty that we will have stable funding? The Congressional representatives said there is a lot of “will” to pass legislation, but nothing permanent so far.

Q: Has there been anyone that has been appointed in less than 2 years? A: It took Mary approximately a year to get appointed.

Q: Is there a chance to get a cattleman that has an allotment, or a logger that is currently logging? David would like to see more on the ground people involved in the RAC. He would like to see a list of people that have range allotments and are willing to pay their range fees be recommended. A: Absolutely, this is what we would like the RAC committee members to do. If anyone would like to come in, we can get them that information.

Laura went over the criteria for membership. Each RAC should be comprised of 15 members that provides a balanced and broad representation from within the 3 categories.

Category A

- Organized labor or non-timber forest product harvester groups
- Developed outdoor recreation, off highway vehicle users, or commercial recreation activities;
- Energy and mineral development interests; or commercial or recreational fishing interests
- Commercial Timber industry
- Holds Federal grazing or other land use permits, or represent nonindustrial private forest land owners, within the area for which the committee is organized

Category B

- Nationally recognized environmental organizations
- Regionally or locally recognized environmental organizations
- Dispersed recreational activities
- Archaeological and historical interests
- Nationally or regionally recognized wild horse and burro interest groups, wildlife or hunting organizations, or watershed associations

Category C

- Hold State elected office or their designee
- Hold county or local elected office
- American Indian tribes within or adjacent to committee area
- School officials or teachers
- Represent the affected public at large.

Members shall reside within the state in which the RAC is organized. To the extent practical, the membership of each of the three categories will include residents in the vicinity of the National Forest for which the committee provides advice.

- Members and replacements are appointed to 4 year terms or reappointed for an additional 2 years.
- The Secretary may appoint a replacement for each of the three membership categories who may serve on the RAC in the event a vacancy arises
- C: Jim Rehder was in a replacement capacity, but when there was a vacancy, he had to be re-appointed by the Secretary. We will clarify that.

The forest needs to recognize that they will not have a quorum next year. How will available funding be allocated if we don't have a quorum?

Q: What is the definition of the quorum? A: It is a majority of those officially appointed. There need to be at least 3 in each category for a quorum. All 3 categories need to agree on a project.

C: The committee is losing out by losing the majority of their members. Susan thinks that the newer members learn from the older members.

It would be nice to be able to stay until a replacement is named. Legislation would need to be changed.

Q: If you don't have a RAC and aren't able to spend the money, what happens to it? A: No one was really sure. Linda pointed out that the money expires about 2 years after we receive it, so if we can get a committee in place, we may be able to spend it. Another comment was made that we could possibly operate as a subcommittee of another RAC until all of our vacancies are filled.

II. Presentations of Full Proposals

Geoff Kaerberle – wanted to give an update on what they had accomplished with last year's funds. The projects are currently under contract and the contractor is a local person so they are adding local jobs. All of the 2014 funds have been spent. He pulled funding for this year because the forest received funds for accelerated restoration. The forest took on additional target in order to accomplish some post fire work. The region has a couple of NEPA teams that will be coming in so they wanted to accelerate their silviculture work.

Q: How does the overhead come off? It was done differently each time. A: We took the amount requested and then took the overhead amount out of this. Only need to consider the subtotal amount.

1 Carol Hennessey/Adam McClory - North Fork RD – Deferred Trail Maintenance, \$9,600.

Request is for 1 hitch of work in conjunction with a Forest Service crew on 2 miles of trail. There are 6 projects being submitted, Carol doesn't believe there is any overlap.

Q: Is the photograph indicative of a problem trail? A: The trail does not meet the specifications. The clearing limits are 3-4 feet of the centerline that need to be brushed.

Q: Does PLAY do a lot of work at Fish Lake? A: No.

Q: Are there other volunteer groups that could do minor brushing? A: There may be, but the other groups have a lot of other things to do and they never quite get in to do the brushing.

“All or none?” All, this is the cost for one hitch of work.

2 Jessica Vance, Scofield Creek Culvert Replacement Survey and Design, \$26,000

Q: What will the money do? A: It will be a contract for design. Potlatch will have a match of \$3,000. They will construct the pipe.

Q: Estimated project dates? A: Start date 2016 and end date 2018. Not sure if it will be installed by 2018. Things seem to take longer in that area. The funding won't go to the building of the bridge, just the survey and design.

Q: How many jobs will be created? A: a couple crews for a couple days doing the surveys. Maybe 4 weeks of people time + 1 week of crew time. All contracted.

Minimum amount? Could take a reduction, not sure how much. We are under the 50% that we need to fund for watershed projects. So there is no point in asking this project what the minimum amount they can fund.

If the culvert were to fail, several tons of sediment would flow into Washington Creek.

Q: Anadromous fish? A: Fish only make it to Dworshak Dam. There are west slope cutthroat trout habitat.

3 Adam McClory, Bald Mountain Lookout Roof Replacement and Lightning Protection Upgrade, \$25,000

One of the 3 most popular sites on our forest for renting. The site sleeps 4 and rents for \$45. It is booked for the whole season. The FS receives \$3600 in revenue for renting the facility and they try to address the deferred maintenance of the facility. In 2013 they realized they had leaking in the roof and have tried to patch it, but this hasn't worked and they have had to replace the flooring recently. The facility is currently operational and functional.

Q: Would the lightning protection currently in place continue to work? A: Yes, but it makes sense to upgrade the lightning protection at the same time as the roof.

Q: Will the work be completed before the rental season begins? A: Yes, depends on how quickly we receive the money.

Q: There are 4 other infrastructure project proposals. Could we get a forest list of priorities? A: Yes.

Q: Have you looked for other funding, i.e. Lookout preservation group? A: No. He is aware of that organization, but hasn't had the ability to check with them for funding.

Q: Minimum amount? A: The roof replacement, \$7500.

4 Mike Cook, Sweeney Hill/FS 1199 Road, \$50,000

Last year, the RAC group funded \$70,000 for crack seal on the Dixie road. Not sure if they will be able to get the work done this year because of the slide. They will be seeking an extension.

The first 2 miles is a paved surface which serves 34 homes in the area. Deterioration is rapidly occurring in the asphalt. The only road project that the Forest Service and county have submitted this year. Looked at funding from Idaho State. Project will be completed by the Idaho County road crew. If they contract, it would be 40% more for that 2 miles. It is under a schedule A maintenance agreement with the Forest Service.

Minimum: \$50,000

Q: Can they access the FEMA funds? A: No, they tried.

Q: How many residents does this affect? A: The lamb's grade will allow even more access.

Q: Is there a shortfall in funding for the county staff, or could we get by paying for materials and supplies? A: No, they would still be working, so they could possibly accept less, but the county would be bringing on additional equipment and help to do this.

5 Anne Connor, Little Slate Project - Riparian plantings, \$5,000

The forest has been out in this area the last couple of years. They are trying to do several things at once in this area. Asking for extra funds for crew time, plants are all paid for.

Q: Are the bridges ATV bridges? A: Yes

Q: Timeframe in relation to bridge replacement, bridge work done and then this project? A: Yes, the bridge project has already been let, and there is a fish window that ends this summer sometime and they will plant in the fall.

Q: Is this primarily a watershed project? A: Yes

C: Exact kind of resource leveraging work we should be rewarding.

6 Sally Ferguson, Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation Volunteer and Internship Program, \$100,814

Would like to thank Carol and her shop for the work she did on making sure there was no overlap in the trails projects.

They provide wilderness management support and raise about 30% of their budget. They provide support for cabin hosting, would like to start working with the Lochsa Historical Ranger Station. They need to formalize their program a little more and have been asked for their support. They are a community partner and try to be a good community partner.

Q: Are there only 14 weeks of work on the ground, and what are the hitch costs? A: 14 weeks of per diem are for the interns who are in the field that long. At the end of their time and the months before, they recruit their own interns. At the end of the 14 weeks, they keep their people in the field until the snow flies or around the end of October.

All or none? They could work with \$85,000 or a little less. This would fund the 4 interns and 4 seasonal staff and a smoke jumping project and cabin volunteer project.

Q: What is the state of rec/trail funding in the region, in particular how does it apply to these forests? A: Right now, the trails budget is being cut 30%. Operating with about 55% of the funding they had in 2006. The forest has to find a way to get things accomplished with their partners.

Q: Could Carol provide a prioritized list? A: She could, but she would rather not because the projects are all different.

Q: Are they collaborating with the Payette trail project? A: She did not look at that project.

Q: Is there a way to leverage the staff time that is proposed here with the Payette time? A: Currently, they also receive funds from the Southwest RAC and are able to pay 2 wilderness interns.

Q: Of the trails budget, how much is wilderness vs non wilderness? A: The forest has the discretion on how they want to spend the dollars.

Q: How much do you receive from the other RACs? A; can't really say, it just depends on how much the RAC has to give.

Q: If we funded half of the \$85,000, could you fund half of the interns and seasonal staff? A: Yes

Q: Are they able to re-use the tools and equipment from year to year? A: Yes, they are asked to provide their own tools and transportation. They purchase and repair their own tools.

7 Cathy Conover, Seven Devils Deferred Trail Maintenance, \$28,800

She depends heavily on volunteers and if it weren't for the RAC funding and MCC they wouldn't be able to do much of anything in the Seven Devils.

This year's proposal is for 3 hitches targeting 26 miles of main trails in the Seven Devils area. Last year, they opened the Boise trail south. They had massive wind shear which downed a lot of trees. She is concerned about slides in some areas of the trail.

Last year's funds for Kirkwood fence replacement, is in progress and will occur in April.

All of the funds she receives go to the Montana Conservation Corps. Her contribution is her wages. It is approximately \$9600 per hitch.

Q: What is the \$4400 under other that she is requesting? A: This is MCC's indirect costs.

8 Thomas C. Lamar (PCEI), Riparian Restoration & Trail Work w/in Nez Perce-Clearwater Nat'l Forests, \$72,907

Would like to fund a 6 member team to work for 12 weeks with the Forest Service. Two miles of road decommission, 4 miles of stream/river restored/improved, 100 acres of native species reestablished, 20 miles of trail maintained. They will source supplies locally and provide a project summary to the RAC. They would like to employ local youth.

Q: What kind of things go into your decommissioned roads? A: They work closely with the forest service to prioritize roads to decommission to incorporate techniques that work well for the area. They tear up the impacted ground and re-seed the area. Sometimes they move logs and rocks out of the way.

Q: Why aren't there specific sites identified? It says it is a continuation of work done in 2015. A: The map that was handed out shows the area in the forest that they are working on. The specifics of what they will be working on are revealed as the snow melts. They are working on completing

projects from last year. They have identified more work than can reasonably be accomplished in one year.

Q: Do you work with the Forest Service to identify their priorities? A: Yes

9 Michael Ball, HCNRA KIRKWOOD HISTORIC MUSEUM REPAIR, \$20,000

The Kirkwood museum is the most visited place in Hells Canyon. Approximately 10,000 people visit that site annually, while around 40,000 visit Hells Canyon annually. Every 4th grader visits this site annually.

The bottom 3-4 sill logs need to be replaced on the museum. They have a huge volunteer program and other maintenance on the site will be done by volunteers. Volunteers are on site year round. The major part of the work will be done contractually. The Forest Service will provide the transportation for the work crews and supplies.

Q: Minimum amount? A: The Jordan family, who lived there in the 20's, will donate \$5,000. So they need \$20,000. \$17,500 was the lowest estimate they received. This came from a contractor that didn't go on site. The 2 contractors that did, estimated it at over \$20,000.

Q: Have you approached the Wallowa Whitman RAC? A: No

Q: If the Wallowa Whitman had to prioritize this project, where would it lie? A: probably in the teens.

10 Patrick Brown Payette NF Youth Corps Trails Project, \$48,000

The Payette has about 550 miles of trails on their prioritized list that they wish to accomplish this year. They have received funds from the Valley County RAC for work in that county. They hope to accomplish 150 miles of trails in Idaho County. They won't be using the Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation for this project.

Q: How do you do it so cheap? A: They have a lot of great infrastructure. They have well-seasoned employees and several stations in the area.

11 Jay Snowden, Idaho Conservation Corp, North Fork/Palouse Developed Recreation Site Maintenance, \$36,552

They could accept a minimum of \$9,000 per week. We have 4 crews of 11 people.

Q: Do you have a formal participating agreement with the Forest Service? A: Yes

12 Anne Connor, Weed Treatment for Watershed Restoration Project Sites, \$30,000

They have tried contracts previously to try to accomplish this project with no success. They have since started working with a Montana Conservation Corp (MCC) crew. She has gotten Forest Service and Tribe funds, but needs additional funds.

Q: Is \$30,000 strictly salaries? A: The money would go into the MCC agreement. This would fund their people and the chemical. The Tribe puts money towards the agreement and their people learn about watershed restoration.

Q: Are you buying equipment, equipment doesn't wear out after 1 year? A: They aren't buying equipment, MCC provides the employees, chemical and equipment.

Q: Is the crew licensed to apply these chemicals? A: Yes, the crew leader is licensed for the chemicals applied, but there is also weed pulling that needs to be done.

Q: Since invasives come in so easy, how is it that they are so bad for the watershed? A: They are bad because they come in in compacted areas and you get more run off. Part of restoration is promoting the natural species on the ground.

Q: Within the areas do you have prioritized areas? A: She will take whatever she can get. The higher priority areas are the landscape scale projects. They would hit the highest priority areas where they are restoring flood plains. Those are the areas with the highest amount of disturbance.
Q: Could we look at \$5,000 increments? A: Yes.

13 Ken Pratt, Idaho Youth Challenge Foundation, IDYCA Service to the Community Initiative, \$8,000

They are a quasi-military school for at risk youth. They have a structured 22 week phase where they go to school and live in barracks. Each cadet has to complete 40 hours of service to the community. They are asking for funds to purchase tools so that they can work alongside the Forest Service. They have the manpower to do this, they just need the tools.

Q: Do we have a formal participating agreement with them? A: Yes

C: This is a very good program that has helped a lot of kids. We have a lot of projects listed that are youth. Don feels this is the best place to put the money.

Q: Do you have the capability to move out of the trailhead? A: Yes, they have vehicles and come in groups of 10. The Forest Service hopes to line them up with preseason and postseason work, cleaning and closing campgrounds, etc.

Q: Have you talked about getting licensing for weed spraying? Spring time is the best time to be doing weed eradication. A: We could talk about that. The kids are under 18 so cannot use some equipment, but the group leaders can.

14 Alex Irby, Clearwater Basin Collaborative (CBC), \$60,000

Q: Has anyone contacted someone about drafting legislation so that the CBC could include administrative costs? A: Steve seems to recall the legislative representatives were going to handle that. Cheryl would be happy to do the groundwork to figure this out. Kent would still like to see follow-up by the congressional representatives.

C: How sustainable is this group if they continue to need money from this RAC?

Q: Does the CBC help the forest to get their work done? A: Absolutely, without a doubt. The numbers show it. We would definitely not have the CFLR project if it wasn't for the CBC. In terms of investment it is a very good deal.

C: We have funded the CBC for so many years that no one has challenged that, and David sees no reason to wake the sleeping dog now.

C: Don is all for getting the legislation changed, but the CFLR project is not the only thing that they work on. They work on projects outside of that area.

C: George Enneking said that the purpose of the legislation was to bring groups together and the CBC is the heart and soul of that legislation.

C: In the RAC's earlier days, they mentioned that they wanted to make an impact, they didn't want to just throw money everywhere. By funding the CBC, it would be a success.

15 Susan Graves, Fenn Ranger Station Roof, \$25,000

Fenn is our premier, historic ranger station on the forest. Fenn is a wet climate so things seems to deteriorate quickly. The current roof was replaced around 20 years ago and has already started to crack. She would like to replace it while we still have the integrity of the building.

Q: Do you have to put a shingle roof on it? A: Yes, since it was put on the Nat'l historic register we need to stay with the same type of roof.

Q: Could we get a prioritized list from the forest? A: Yes, Cheryl will provide this tomorrow.

Q: Aren't you mandated legally to maintain this building since it is on the national historic register? What other avenues have you looked at for funding? A: None yet.

Q: There is state funding for historic places. A: We haven't pursued that yet.

Q: Is the roof leaking? A: Not yet.

Q: Is this all of nothing? A: Yes. She would like to get treated red cedar that is mildew resistant.

C: You can treat the shingles to get them to be fire retardant. A: Sort of.

Opportunity for any RAC Member to Address the Committee

Public Forum: Comments and questions from the public to the committee

Adjourn

March 31st, 2106

RAC Members Present: David Bodine, Craig Spencer, Chris St. Germaine, Gary Lane, Don Ebert, Mary Mangold, Jim Rehder, Bob Hafer, Robert Abbott, Steve Didier, Kent Henderson (Chairman), Susan Borowicz and Emmit Taylor, Jr.

RAC Replacement Members Present: None, positions are currently vacant.

Guests: Dan Carscallen (North Latah Co Hwy Dept.), Scott Becker (Hodge & Associates), Sally Ferguson (Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation), Michelle Youngquist (Project Learning Tree, Idaho Forest Planning Council), Megan Lucas (Forest Service), Connie Jensen Blyth (Idaho County), David Ratliff (Forest Service), Elayne Murphy (Clearwater Basin Collaborative), Jeff Shinn (Forest Service), Alex Irby (Clearwater Basin Collaborative), Michele Windsor (Forest Service), Tom Lamar (Latah County, Pacific Clearwater Environmental Institute), Linda Hinds (Forest Service) and Ralph Rau (Forest Service)

Designated Federal Official: Laura Smith

Recorder: Lisa Canaday

I. Call to Order and Agenda Review

Introductions: 13 members and 14 guests were present.

Agenda Adjustments - None

16 Michelle Youngquist, Idaho Project Learning Tree, \$8,000

Q: Has the increase doubled? A. Last year was \$5,000, this year \$6,000. We're hoping with this increase we can spend more time reaching out and not fundraising.

17 Betty Munis, Forest Tours for Educators & Opinion Leaders, \$6,000

Q: When was the last time the commission increased its assessment? A. It has been a long time.

Q: What is project design? A: The planning that goes into the tours.

C: This is a good bang for our buck. RAC people can apply for forestry tours.

Q: Are the tours in the summer? A: Teachers – June, Opinion Leaders – September.

18 Kahne Jensen-Blyth, Idaho County New Invader Emphasis, \$145,000

We are all partners in the fight against invasives and are doing a really great job! There are a lot of partners in this fight and they are listed in the handout. Our weed problem in this county is a people problem. This means it is up to us to make the decisions about how we are going to manage the invasives in the county. It is less about managing the land and more about managing the decisions of what we are going to do.

The RAC funding has been a major part of what we do and has helped the county to get “a leg up” on weeds. Weed management doesn’t require a lot of chemical, but it does require a lot of dedication to go back and check the sites several times.

Kahne reviewed the number of acres treated, the number of site visits and the average level of control.

This year’s proposal is an emphasis in the South Fork of the Clearwater. The South Fork project is phase II of a larger Forest Service project. This is 48 miles of treating the South Fork corridor.

Q: Chris would like to see a separation of the management of the weed program and the new invader program. A: This year the county has partnered with the Fish and Game. This is a separate proposal from what has been presented before.

Q: Why isn’t Italian thistle mentioned in this proposal, which is an emerging threat? A: Not all weeds were listed due to space constraints. It isn’t a comprehensive list. The county has already been treating it in the South Fork. In the Joseph Plains area, it has gone beyond a new invader.

Q: How much of the control is chemical vs bio? A: It is a mix of both with a strategic approach which has a lot of partners involved in making decisions on which approach would be better. It is well thought out with a lot of data management involved. It is more perspiration than chemical!

Q: Have you ever looked at the source of the invaders? A: Those exact discussions are occurring on the Selway. There is someone looking at how weeds travel, i.e. wind models, etc.

Q: Is this project on Forest Service land? A: The rules say they must be on Forest Service land or adjacent to. Weeds know no boundaries.

Q: Has the connection with chemicals been studied with the vanishing of the bees? A: The vanishing of the bees is actually associated with a pesticide which is not being used.

19 North Latah County Highway District, Park Road Bridge Replacement, \$200,000

The Park Road Bridge is 80’ long and has had structural problems for years. They have worked with LTAC and FLAP to try to get funds with no success. This road leads into the Forest Service land.

The highway district has come up with some funding, but not enough to get the bridge replaced. There are timber sales coming up and the detour to go around this bridge is 26 miles. Potlatch has also come up with some funds to contribute.

The road leads to the Boulder Creek Campground. The road sees a lot of traffic. The daily traffic when it was checked a few years ago was 130 per day and in the summer it sees a lot more traffic.

The forest is in the NEPA process right now for a large scale project. This bridge project would really assist in the feasibility of accessing the site.

Q: If it is not safe enough for heavier rigs, why is it safe for cars? A: It is load rated right now for light traffic. If it were going to be just light traffic, they could keep that up for a while.

Q: Why didn't it meet LTAC or FLAP standards? A: Because of the sufficiency rating for LTAC. Anything below 50, they can go after federal funds for the project. Because there are load limit signs on the bridge, they are at 53.

Q: At what point would it go below 50? A: They anticipate that could happen at the next bridge inspection. This one is inspected every other year. It depends on the bridge inspector.

Right now a loaded logging truck and logging equipment cannot go on the bridge. There is a cattle ranch in that area and they cannot utilize the bridge.

Q: How many times have you applied for LTAC funding? A: At least the last 3-4 years.

C: This is the only project that has anything to do with producing a commodity to the market place.

Q: If we could fund \$100,000 for the design of the bridge, would that put you into a phased approach? A: Yes, it would definitely get the ball rolling.

Q: Would \$100,000 get you into a better situation with other funding? A: Yes

Q: Is this bridge on Forest Service land? A: Yes

Do we have a map of what our RAC area of responsibility is? We can get one.

Does anyone have any comments about the projects?